Volume 30, No. 7, July 1998

carolina country

the monthly magazine of north carolina's electric cooperatives

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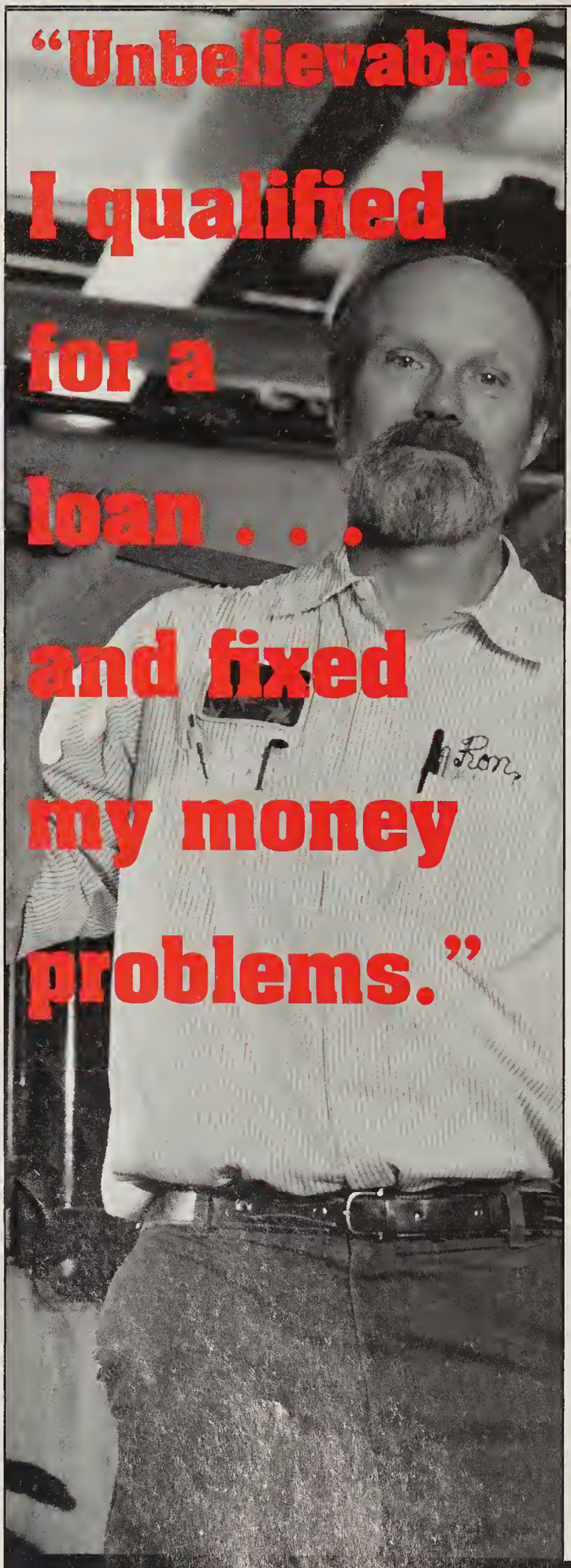
The finest meal you ever had - *page 6*



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Volume 30, No. 7, July 1998

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You're invited to Doc Watson's Party

Doc Watson probably has more fans among Carolina Country readers than any other magazine readers, so you all should know that Watauga County extends an open invitation to attend Doc's Day on Saturday, July 18. Doc turns 75 this year and we want to show him we appreciate all he's done for music and North Carolina.

Doc Watson lives in Deep Gap and sure does appreciate the service they get there from Blue Ridge Electric.

All proceeds from Doc's Day will benefit the Appalachian Folk Art Musicians Museum and Hall of Fame that will be part of the Watauga History Center. We are restoring the Old Cove Creek School (and getting help from Blue Ridge Electric's energy experts).

A lot of Doc's pickin' and playin' buddies will be here, along with food and speechmakin'. We'll see you July 18 beginning at 11 a.m. at Old Cove Creek School in Sugar Grove, six miles west of Boone on old Hwy. 421. Bring your lawn chair.

Tommy Walsh
Sugar Grove
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May magazine is just the ticket

The May magazine is the best thing that ever happened for me and a friend of mine who wants to relocate to North Carolina. It is so helpful in giving me all the numbers to contact for brochures and information. I love the magazine anyway, but this is the best. I am forwarding a copy to my friend.

Angie Sitner
Davidson EMC

Here are some revisions to the listings we published in May's "See North Carolina: A 1998 Touring Guide."

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Chef Bob's pecan pie

We enjoy the magazine every month, and today found that you have a Web site. Please have someone from your Carolina Kitchen send us the recipe for pecan pie.

Evelyn Wells
Mt. Olive

I saw one of your Carolina Country magazines this week while waiting to get my oil changed and was very impressed with it. I have ordered a sample copy.

The one I read referred to a pecan pie recipe by Gov. Hunt's former chef. I had hoped it would still be on the Internet, but was not. Would be so kind as to e-mail it to me?

Edwin E. Miller, Jr.

We plan to return Chef Bob's pecan pie recipe to our Web site (ncemcs.com). Meantime, here is the recipe:

Pecan Pie

3 eggs
1 cup light karo syrup
1/2 cup brown sugar
1/2 cup butter
1 teaspoon vanilla
Pinch of salt
1 to 1-1/2 cups pecans
1 9- or 10-inch pie shell, unbaked

Beat eggs, melt butter. Combine ingredients except pecans. Mix well and pour into a 9- or 10-inch unbaked pie shell. Top with pecans. Bake at 350 degrees for 35-45 minutes or until firm in center.

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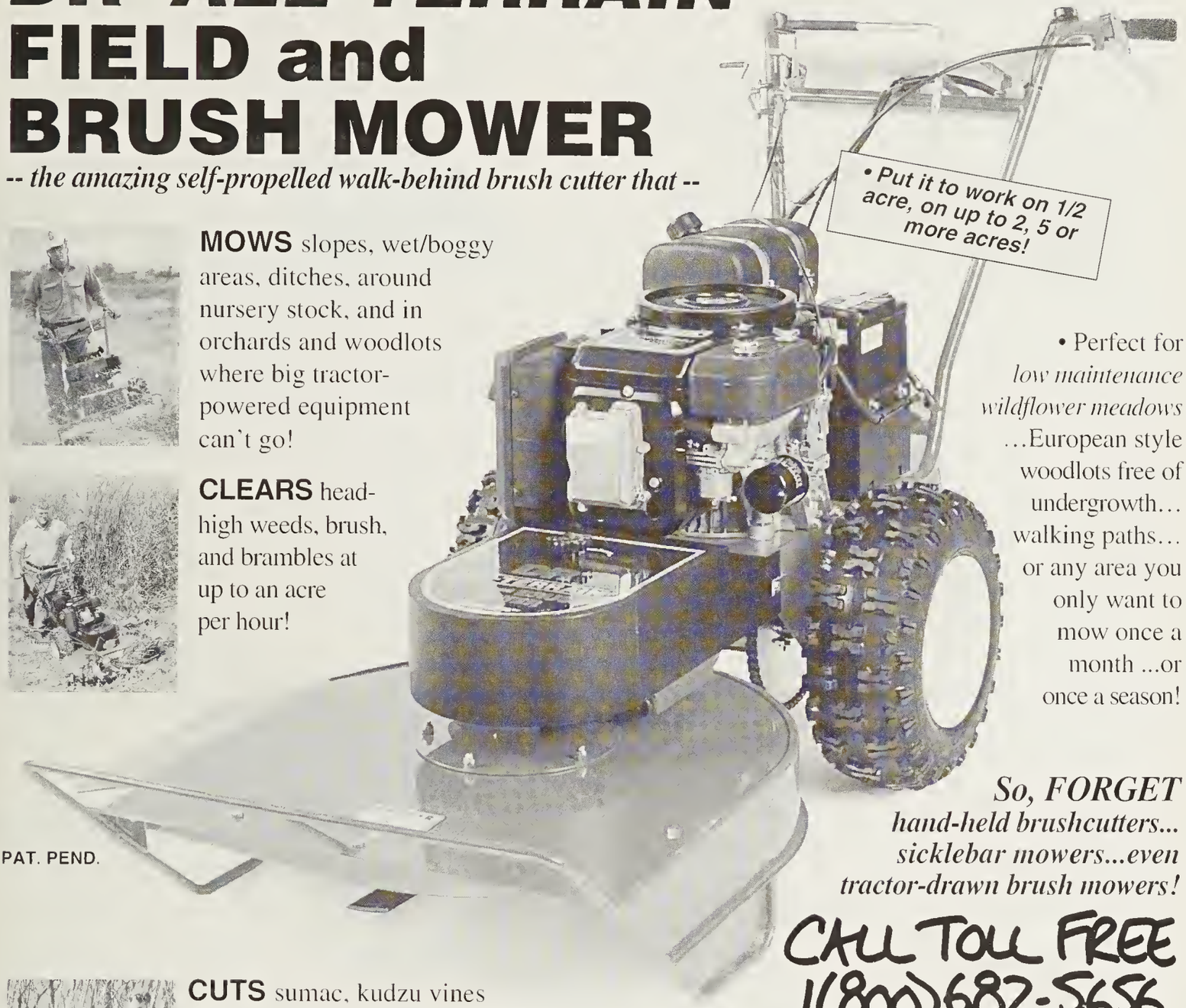

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Country cookin'

The finest meals you ever had

The finest food in North Carolina seems to be down-home country cookin,' prepared by momma and served with lots of love.

Of some 200 letters we received on this month's topic, "The Finest Meal I Ever Had: We're talking North Carolina food here," most contained some or all of these ingredients: country ham, cat-head biscuits and blackberry jam, red-eye gravy, milk gravy, sausage gravy, southern fried chicken, shredded pork barbecue, chicken and dumplings, stew beef, stewed apples, creamed potatoes, stewed tomatoes, fried okra, fried cabbage, sweet potatoes, fresh corn, fried squash, snap beans, pinto beans, butter beans in fatback, fried cornbread, cracklin bread, cole slaw, collards, cucumbers in vinegar, fresh milk, sweet tea, peach cobbler, blackberry cobbler . . .

Looks and smells like a church dinner "on the grounds." And some of you wrote about those church dinners. Most often, you wrote about how the people eating with you were more important to you than what you ate, no matter how good it was.

The judges say we should expand the number of these pages to run more of your stories, because so many of them should be published. If we ever get around to publishing a Carolina Country cookbook, maybe we'll put them in there.

Meantime, here's a hearty helping.

Next month we'll run a selection of your stories on "The Finest Lesson I Learned in School."(Deadline was June 15). There's still time to enter a photograph of North Carolina places or people for September's photo contest (deadline is July 15). See page 8 for details.

– MG

Taters, cornbread and Granny

Growing up in the small, rural community of Sunny-View, many afternoons I trailed after my Granny Kate Wilson. One afternoon in early spring, Granny and I took a walk down to the old cabin in the valley where she was raised. No prettier place in Earth existed to my young mind. As we walked up the huge slabs of rock that formed the steps up to the porch, it seemed we walked back in time.

Granny always kept a few provisions there for such a time as this. She stirred up a fire in the old cooker stove that her own mama had used. She found some stored taters and cornmeal from corn that had been grown in her garden. While she baked, she softly hummed "Rock of Ages" as I read out loud from the Bible. She slathered butter on both the taters and the cornbread.

On that day long ago, I found there's nothing finer than spring water, Carolina taters and cornbread, baked with a grandma's loving hands. I learned a lot about life from Granny's home-grown goodness.

Sheila W. Hughes
Tryon
Rutherford EMC

Pointed-head cabbage

We always had a garden when I was growing up on our farm in Selma. Planted in that garden was every vegetable that went on our table at meal times. Working on the farm was hard at times, but I loved the garden. We had potatoes, the good red ones. And those wonderful, green cabbages, the pointed-head ones. (Country folks know what kind.) And cucumbers, the small green, pickling kind.

Mama and I would go out to the garden and dig around the hills of potatoes when they were just beginning to make. We would get the small 50-cent sized ones. Mama would cut a couple of those pointed-head cabbages, and I'd pick some cucumbers fresh off the vines.

We rolled the fresh dug potatoes outside in a tub of water to get most of the skin off. What skin didn't come off —but most did — we scraped off with a knife. (You didn't peel fresh dug potatoes.) Then mama quartered up the cabbages and put them in a pot of already boiled ham hock to season them up really well. Then she took up the cabbage and drained them well. She chopped them up with a hand chopper. Mama would skim a little grease off the top of the pot liquor and pour it over the top of the cabbage. The potatoes were boiled whole in water with a touch of some good meat grease until just done. Then

Mama took a paper towel and dried them before frying them whole to a delicious golden-brown. The cucumbers were peeled, sliced, and placed in a bowl of vinegar with salt and pepper. Mama would fry up some good old cornbread.

Those fresh potatoes, cabbage, cucumbers, ham hocks and cornbread was the best meal I ever had. Not just once, but many times I've enjoyed that meal. And I want to say a special thanks to my parents, Jack and Agnes Weaver, for all they taught me on the farm.

Charlotte Marie Weaver
Princeton
Tri-County EMC

Bright Leaf bologna and Duke's mayonnaise

With my husband in the military, we have traveled to some beautiful places and had some of the best food you can find.

In 1990 and 1991 we lived in Mainz, Germany, a truly beautiful place with some of the best food we have ever tasted. Being from North Carolina, we soon missed things that you could only buy here. Things like Bright Leaf bologna and hot dogs, Duke's mayonnaise, and Pine State ice cream.

I remember saying to my Dad on the phone one day that what I missed most was a good old bologna sandwich. This became kind of a joke with our whole family.

After two years and the Gulf War, we were to come home. Both our families were at the airport to meet us and suggested we go out for a meal. But after eight hours of flying, I remarked that I would be happy just going home and eating bologna. I soon learned that my Dad had brought us a case each of Bright Leaf hotdogs and bologna. It was really funny when my husband's parents told us they had done the same!

We may have laughed all the way home that night, but when we got to Dad's house, I sat down to a sandwich of Bright Leaf bologna and Duke's mayonnaise. It meant Home Sweet Home!

Carolyn Tew
Dunn
South River EMC

Enough for somebody else

My mother, Priscilla H. Cochran, a widow, is 86 and lives in Swan Quarter, Hyde County. She is in Cross Creek Health Care now, but the memory of her delicious lunches will stay with me forever.

Every day for lunch she would set the table and prepare a meal for herself plus a little extra. From time to time, I would drop in on her unexpectedly at lunchtime. Never once did I find her eating without the table set and various cooked dishes with enough for somebody else.

My favorite meal was stewed Irish potatoes — cooked only the way she could cook them — sliced tomatoes, cucumber slices in a little vinegar, homemade biscuits, butter beans cooked with ham hock, iced tea, and cake with ice cream.

William I. Cochran Jr.
Washington
Tideland EMC

Goldfish from a grandson

I remember one Wednesday not too long ago at my husband's place of business it was very busy. The phone rang constantly and people were coming in and out all day long. We didn't have time to think about food, let alone eat any.

After the work day was over, I went home and straightened up some. By then it was time to get ready for church.

As I was sitting in church, I heard my stomach start growling. My two-year-old grandson was sitting beside me. He reached into his diaper bag and pulled out a bag of goldfish cracker treats after hearing me softly say to him "Momaw's hungry." He climbed up on my lap and began stuffing goldfish into my mouth. I didn't want to be distracting, so I whispered into his ear, "Not now. I'll eat later."

I found out real quick that if I didn't eat those goldfish, he was going to cause a scene. So one by one, he fed me goldfish. (He ate some, too.) And I can say that it was by far, the best meal I ever had, fed to me by the hands of my grandson.

Sandy Hightower
Morganton
Rutherford EMC

Hayden & Helen

My husband, our two young children and I arrived in North Carolina late last June. We had purchased an old farm, barely livable, no water, none of our belongings (moving van took a month to arrive) and some 700 miles away from everyone and everything we had ever known.

It took two days to get the water working, and the weather was unbearably hot. Everything in sight needed to be painted, replaced or torn down. We slept on the floors hoping for some kind of breeze to blow through and dreaming the next day would bring our belongings - including the stove and refrigerator. We ate at every fast food place in town, tried keeping ice in a cooler for drinks and milk for the kids' breakfast and sometimes cooked on an old grill.

After two long weeks of "camping" in our new home, we had the finest North Carolina meal ever. Our new neighbors, whom we hadn't even met, brought us a pot roast dinner with all the fixin's, including fresh corn on the cob from her garden and warm homemade biscuits. We couldn't wait to get our cardboard box table set with our paper plate china, plastic silverware and paint bucket seats. It seemed like it had been forever since we had eaten "real" food. She had not only brought a superbly cooked meal, but there was enough food for a small army. We ate everything!

I don't think she realizes how special that meal was to us. We will never forget such an act of kindness from total strangers. I am proud to say that our new neighbors, Hayden & Helen, hold a very special place in our hearts.

Mrs. Terry LaSalle
Taylorsville
Crescent EMC

Fish on Friday

Being raised in Robeson County around St. Paul's in the early 1950s and coming from a large family, we couldn't afford to eat meat every day. But on Friday we always had fish. These were not no ordinary fish. They was Carolina mullets. The making of my favory meal was in the fall, when the mullets was running off the coast of North Carolina, and the frost had fallen on the collard greens to sweeten them, and the sweet potatoes had been dug and had time to dry.

My mother cooked on a wood stove, used hot lard for frying and seasoned the collard with bacon grease. We had never heard of cholesterol or a low-salt diet.

On Friday afternoon my mother would walk to town and get $2 worth of fish. Back then that would feed eight kids, my mother and father, and anyone that might stop by

continued on page 8

Nothing could be finer

Fish on Friday *continued*

Try that today.

First she would salt and coat the fish with cornmeal, then fry them to a golden brown. And if they had a roe in them she would cook them to. This meal was set off with hot-cooked cornbread. Daddy would bring the cornmeal home from Mr. Budd's grist mill. It was coarse ground and the best in the world. Mother didn't use baking powder, so it didn't rise. The cornmeal, salt and a little flour was mixed together, and she would make patties with her hands and fry them in the grease where the fish had been cooked.

As I set here writing this I can almost smell the mullets fry and the warm aroma of the sweet potatoes baking.

Years later I was telling a friend of mine how we would eat fish every Friday. She asked me if we were Catholic. I said no, that was just the day that the fish man came to town.

Lula K. Grover
Fayetteville
South River EMC

Gigged flounder

When the time of year comes around, my PaPa and his friends go fishing down at the North Carolina coast. They don't call it fishing, they call it flounder gigging. They use a flat-bottom boat in very shallow water with a special light attached. If you look real close you can see the outline of the flounder in the sand. Then they stick them with a gig, a long pole with spikes on the end.

Man, you want to talk about some good eating! PaPa cleans the flounder and then cuts it into steaks. No filets here. Bones in, and tails left on. Salt and pepper to taste and rolled in corn meal. Finally deep fat fried in a cast iron skillet. Cole slaw, hushpuppies, white rice and fried sweet potatoes make-up the rest of the meal. The smell alone is enough to drive you crazy. Somebody please pass the ketchup.

Hey, PaPa! When are you going fishing again?

Amanda McDonald
Stedman
South River EMC

Tomato sandwich

The finest meal I've ever had is a meal I have year after year. It's provided by someone who doesn't even cook. The meal is a homegrown tomato sandwich, and the gardener is my father, Glenn.

Each spring he plants his small garden, and I soon start asking, "When will the tomatoes ripen, Daddy?" The day finally comes. I joyfully put together my simple feast of bread, mayonnaise, salt and pepper, and one of those first garden tomatoes. I especially love it when the juice runs out onto my fingers, and I have to wash up. Delicious!

I eat tomato sandwiches until the season is over. Why is this my favorite meal? Because it is the taste of my father's love and of my home.

Sherry M. Stewart
Lincolnton
Rutherford EMC

In the short rows now

When I was about 13 years old, the help didn't show up for tobacco priming on my grandfather's Stokes County farm. I was drafted (as in, did not volunteer) to help.

I didn't take time for breakfast, and about mid-morning I was starving. Famished. And this was before the days of pop and Nab breaks being so readily available.

While resting at the end of the long rows of tobacco, I saw my grandmother walk up with a little basket. In that little basket there was a cold bacon-and-egg biscuit and a cold blackberry jelly biscuit (homemade, of course) left over from breakfast.

Now, folks, I'm here to tell you: I've dined in some mighty fine restaurants and had some pretty fancy foods, but that meal in the shade at the end of the field was the best one I've ever had.

Terry Joyce
Pilot Mountain
Surry Yadkin EMC

Send us your stories and photos. Earn $50.

Here are the themes and deadlines for the coming months of "Nothing Could Be Finer." You don't have to be a superior writer to send us a letter. Put your heart into it, as the writers this month did.

The Rules

1. Approximately 200 words or less.
2. Only one entry per household per month.
3. Typed or e-mail, if possible. Otherwise, make it legible.
4. Include your name, electric co-op, mailing address and phone number.
5. If you want your entry returned, please include a self-addressed, stamped envelope. (We will not return others.)
6. We pay $50 for each submission published.
7. Send to Nothing Finer, Carolina Country, 3400 Sumner Blvd., Raleigh, NC 27616. Or by e-mail: carolina.country@ncemcs.com

September
The Finest Pictures of North Carolina, a photo contest.
North Carolina people and places. Color or B&W.
Deadline: July 15

October
You're So Fine: Why I Like My Electric Cooperative
What does your electric cooperative mean to you?
Deadline: August 15

November
The Finest North Carolina Gift You Can Give
(Made in North Carolina.)
Deadline: Sept. 15

December
The Finest Story in North Carolina History
Historical truths, humorous or otherwise.
Deadline: Oct. 15

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More Power to You

What's ahead for *electricity* users in North Carolina?

Your electric cooperative's point of view

Soon, the business of delivering your electricity may not be the same as it is today. New companies — some small, some large — will share the business with the traditional electric utilities that have been serving you for many years. And the electric utility you know today may someday offer you more than electric power services.

If there are changes, the new business structure must be formed carefully, so you as a consumer can benefit. That's why it's important for you to know as much as possible about what's going on to restructure, deregulate or "re-regulate" the electric utility industry.

What's going on?

Across the U.S., state governments and regulatory agencies are opening the electric service business to more competition. Their purpose is to bring more flexibility and better pricing to the electricity market for all users.

The federal government eventually may redesign the national framework regulating electric power generation and transmission. But the groundwork is occurring on the state level because making and delivering electricity remains a regional activity, affected by the location of power plants, weather, consumption patterns, and investments made by utilities who have served their communities for generations.

In North Carolina, a 23-member committee appointed by the governor and the General Assembly — The Study Commission on the Future of Electric Service in North Carolina — has been examining the issues since November 1997. The commission's final report will be considered in the 1999 General Assembly if legislative changes are recommended.

Some states already have opened the generation business to retail competition or "customer choice." They are states where electric rates have been relatively high. Rates in North Carolina and other southern states, on the other hand, have remained in the mid-range and lower compared to the Northeast and California, and as a result our state is studying the experiences elsewhere before making fundamental changes. In the future, you may be able to choose the company that generates your electric power. Also, your local electric utility may offer you a variety of services besides electricity — including long-distance service, Internet access, credit cards, satellite TV, water, propane gas, appliance repair — and you could pay for it all through a single billing system.

At present, the electric utility that serves you is determined by where you live (*see pages 14-15*). That utility either generates electricity at a power plant or contracts to buy power in bulk. The same utility coordinates the transmission of that power across high voltage lines, then arranges for its distribution through substations and wires to serve its consumers, and finally meters the consumer's use and issues the bills. The same utility is responsible for building

and maintaining the distribution system, for ensuring a reliable and safe supply of power, for training its employees and communicating with consumers. In an open, "deregulated" market, these services could be separated or "unbundled" and offered by more than one company.

Will cooperatives still be here?

Today, more than 900 electric co-ops serve 31 million people in 46 states, collectively supplying electricity to 11 percent of the nation's population.

There is no reason for cooperatives to fade away as utilities or as any other business. In fact, in states where restructuring is farther along than in North Carolina, consumers and businesses are forming new cooperatives for the purpose of supplying themselves with electricity and other services.

Cooperatives are insisting that government officials not place any impediments in restructuring laws that would hinder the formation or operations of cooperatives.

Who will supply the power?

The most substantial change likely to occur in a newly competitive marketplace is that consumers will have a choice of who supplies their base source of electricity. It may be similar to the choice consumers have in their long-distance telephone service provider.

No one yet knows how many power suppliers will emerge, for how long, nor how many of them will be interested in serving small energy users. New companies are forming not only to generate electricity, but also to market it. And many of the existing utilities and marketers will remain in business as providers of bulk power.

The transmission of bulk power across high-voltage lines, and the distribution of power locally to homes and businesses, probably will continue to be overseen by government agencies. Laws likely will require the owners of the transmission and distribution facilities to carry and deliver the power to consumers, and the owners of the transmission and distribution systems would charge an access fee for these services.

Truly open access to the regional transmission systems and firm boundaries for local distribution systems will preclude the possibility of duplication of delivery hardware such as towers, substations, poles and wires.

Who will control the transmission and distribution?

State utility commissions have established distribution territories in order to avoid the unsightly and wasteful scenario of duplicate sets of poles and lines in the same neighborhood. This is one reason why cooperatives are pressing for firm assignment of utility distribution service areas, as well as areas not yet assigned.

Determining when and how the electricity gets delivered to those distribution areas is being discussed in the restructuring debates. It is likely that a new structure will include "independent system operators" or ISOs serving certain regions of the country. An ISO would run the transmission system independently from the utilities themselves, and would be regulated by a government body such as Federal Energy Regulatory Commission. Like a traffic officer, an ISO would control the transmission of electrical power in a regional grid, not only ensuring reliability of power, but also overseeing fairness in pricing. Own-ership of the transmission system could remain with private companies, but use of the system would be controlled by an ISO.

Local distribution services likewise will remain regulated by state agencies in order to ensure the quality, reliability and safety of the service. Cooperatives are pressing for an assurance of "universal service," which means that affordable electric service should be available to everyone who requires it. In that sense, what is fair for rural consumers will be fair for all consumers.

continued on next page

Will services and rates change?

Consumers may see a difference in the services offered by utilities and the cost of those services.

The typical monthly electric bill will look different *(see the sample on page 13)*. Just as your telephone bill now separates long-distance from local rates, your utility bill will separate "energy" rates from local service rates. As always, however, what your cooperative charges you reflects the cost of doing business.

It is also possible that your cooperative, along with other electric utilities, will offer other services for your convenience. For example, you may choose to buy long-distance telephone service, satellite TV services and Internet access from your local cooperative, because you have come to trust their service. These additional charges could also appear on your monthly bill.

Today, more than 900 electric co-ops serve 31 million people in 46 states, collectively supplying electricity to 11 percent of the nation's population.

Will competition affect reliability and safety?

Since they formed 60 years ago, electric cooperatives have made reliability and safety of electric service their first priorities. As long as North Carolina's cooperatives provide your service, there will be no compromises to safety and reliability.

An electricity supplier known for safety and reliability could have a competitive advantage. As new technology becomes available — such as today's devices that protect appliances and household circuits from lightning power surges — the utilities that make such services available to consumers may have a competitive edge over those that do not.

Who will do the metering and billing?

North Carolina's cooperatives believe that the metering and billing functions should remain with the existing electric utility at the distribution level. If different metering companies were allowed to control the metering portion of the system, the distribution company could not be assured of receiving accurate, timely and sufficient data on which to base billing, repair and dispatch decisions. Also, any time a consumer wished to change suppliers, the consumer's access to uninterrupted electricity may be impaired.

If an unlimited number of unregulated meter suppliers appeared in the market, the consumer would have little protection against inaccurate or fraudulent metering practices. Conceivably, there could be hundreds of different reading intervals, billing formats, and payment or disconnection procedures.

As with metering, the residential customer must be protected with respect to billing and collection practices. Distribution companies already have in place the necessary computer systems and trained personnel required for reliable billing, collection and customer service functions.

Will we see new marketing schemes?

In a more open market you will see various companies competing for your business. A representative may call you, or you may see advertisements offering low-cost energy.

Competitive "gimmicks," such as those seen in some of the electric competition pilot programs across the country, may seem to offer lower rates, but the rates may be temporary.

Flim-flam tactics would harm customers and established utilities, such as North Carolina's distribution cooperatives, which must set rates at levels sufficient to meet capital obligations to creditors. Cooperatives insist that any changes discourage gimmicks and prevent inexperienced or unqualified businesses from undermining the market.

Will "small users" and rural areas really have a choice?

There is considerable uncertainty whether restructuring will truly provide choices to the "small" user, meaning residential and small commercial consumers who use less electricity and have less market clout than large industrial users. In North Carolina, 99 percent of electric cooperative consumers meet this definition of "small user."

In the past, deregulation of railroad, airline, cable television and telephone industries has meant a decline in services to rural customers, if,

Your Electric Bill

ACCOUNT NUMBER	NAME	RATE	SERVICE ADDRESS
14-41-70	Doe, John	11	1313 Mockingbird Ln, City, St 20851

SERVICE DATES FROM	TO	METER READING PREVIOUS	PRESENT	KWH	CHARGES
2-3-1998	3-4-98	48201	49201	1000	

	Customer Charge		$xx.xx
A	Energy Charge	1000kwh x 0.0xx	$xx.xx
B	Transmission Service	1000kwh x 0.0xx	$ x.xx
C	Distribution Service	1000kwh x 0.0xx	$ x.xx
D	Competitive Transition Charge (CTC)	1000kwh x 0.0xx	$xx.xx
	Tax		$x.xx
	TOTAL DUE NOW		$xx.xx

After Restructuring

Some charges that today are combined in your bill would be itemized.

A energy charge represents the cost of electricity itself.

B transmission services for moving energy from the power plant to local distribution utility.

C distribution services for delivering power to the user.

D competitive transition charge to cover "stranded costs."

indeed, rural areas received the service in the first place.

In rural areas, freedom of choice is not the real issue. The real issue is something to choose at all. Rural residents may be "free to choose" any gas station, grocery store or doctor; but, in reality, they will often have only one "choice" for these services.

North Carolina's electric cooperatives are urging reformers to consider the past effects of deregulation in other businesses, and to make any change based on what would benefit a rural consumer. If a change benefits a "small user," it is likely to benefit everyone else.

What about the investments that utilities have already made?

The move toward open markets for electric power raises the possibility that many utility investments, built for long-term economy, might be overvalued relative to the short-term, market-determined values. Utility investments could become "stranded" in the transition to competitive markets.

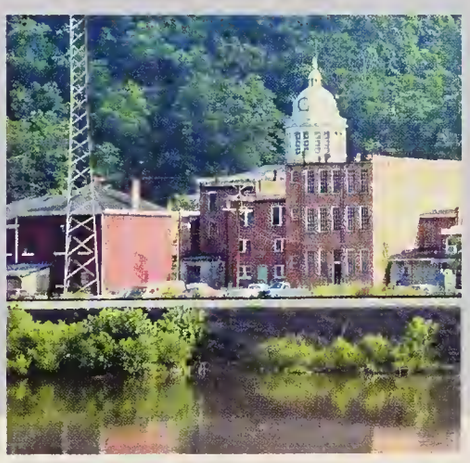
Stranded assets include investments in power plants whose fixed costs may not be recoverable from sales revenues. Likewise, liabilities such as long-term contractual obligations to purchase power may become over-valued and stranded. The critical and most visible factor affecting stranded costs is the gap between the current regulated prices that retail customers pay and the theoretically lower unregulated prices that may be available in the new competitive markets. Stranded costs will result from the difference between the investment cost of an asset and the market value of that asset based on future competitive market prices.

Your cooperative is stressing that any changes in the electric utility industry in North Carolina provide for the recovery of stranded assets and liabilities.

Where does this leave us?

Opening the electric service market to more competition is a major undertaking with serious implications for consumers. It also has become a dominant political issue in many states.

Your electric cooperative is well experienced in promoting co-op principles and consumer rights in the halls of government as well as in communities and corporate boardrooms. Throughout the restructuring process, your cooperative will insist that changes in regulations must not neglect the average consumer, and that any benefits apply to all users.



For more information?

For more information about changes facing North Carolina's electric utility industry, contact you electric cooperative, or:

North Carolina Association of Electric Cooperatives, P.O. Box 27306, Raleigh, NC 27611. Phone: (800) 662-8835. Chris Heagarty (ext. 3074), legislative contact.

The following staff of the North Carolina Association of Electric Cooperatives contributed to this article: Carolyn Herr Watts, vice president of Corporate Relations; Nelle Hotchkiss, director of Government and Public Relations; Michael E.C. Gery, editor of Carolina Country; and Leisha L. Hodgson, art director and designer for Carolina Country. 1.800.662.8835.

A Guide to Electric Utilities i

More than 100 separately organized electric utilities serve North Carolina's consumers. Depending on where you live or work, you could receive electric service from a consumer-owned cooperative, an investor-owned utility, your city government, or some other utility operating in the state. Each covers a designated area.

In the early days of electrification, power generally was available only in larger communities, where power companies could be assured of an economic return. In the 1930s and '40s, rural residents formed electric cooperatives that they could own and manage themselves to bring electricity to more sparsely populated regions.

After World War II, growth in North Carolina's towns and cities began spilling over into these formerly rural areas. In 1965, the North Carolina Utilities Commission (an agency of state government formed in 1891) brought together investor-owned utilities and cooperatives in order to define and assign service areas. This division of service areas still stands today, although with some modifications.

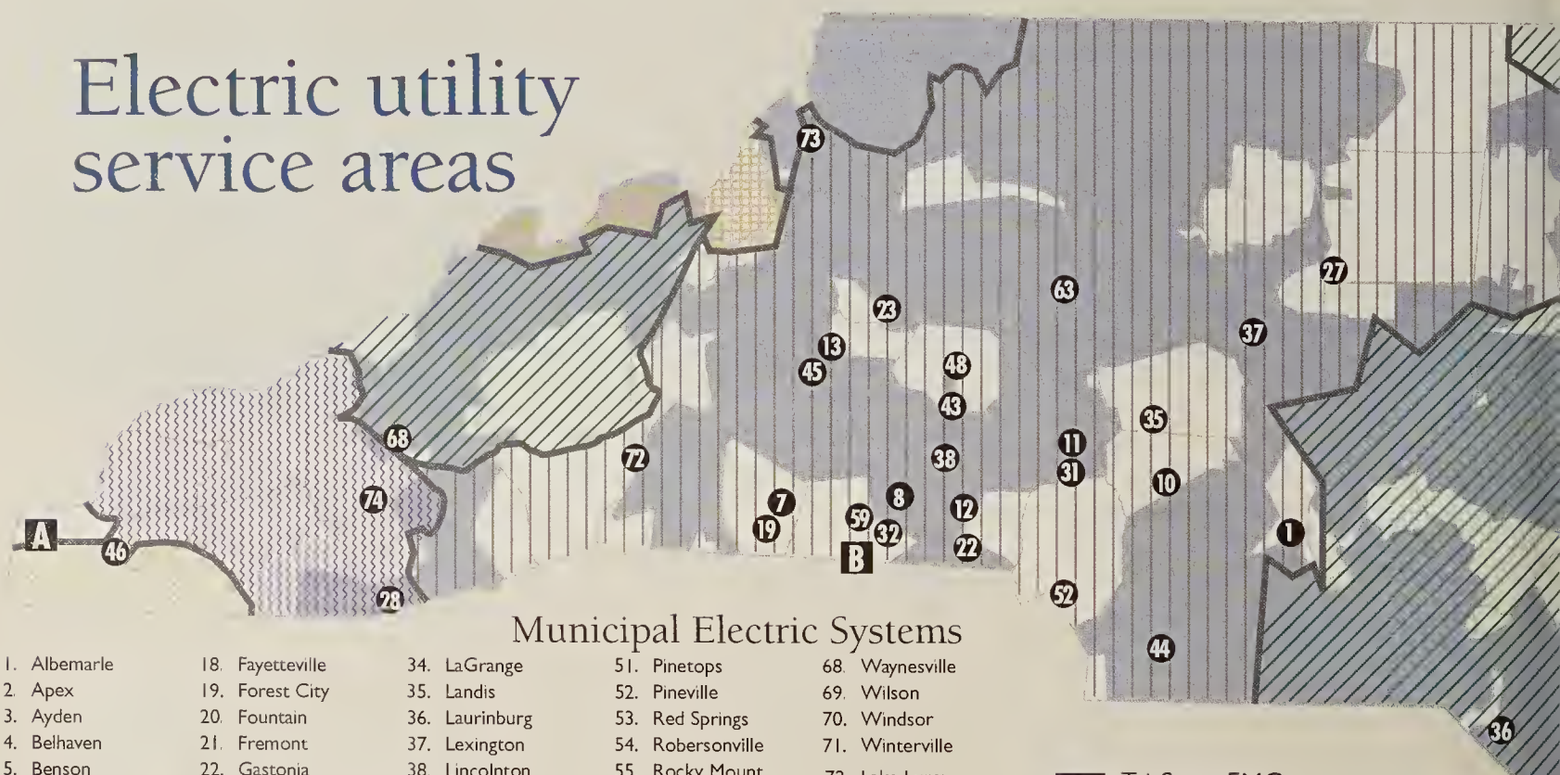
The North Carolina Utilities Commission has jurisdiction over the licensing of new generating plants operated by all electric utilities and over the construction of new electric transmission facilities that are 161 kilovolts and above in size. Investor-owned utilities operate within the jurisdiction of the commission, which oversees their rates and service practices. Cooperatives and municipal electric systems are regulated by their own local governing bodies.

Cooperatives pay all the taxes that investor-owned utilities pay, except income tax, because cooperatives are not-for-profit organizations.

The North Carolina Rural Electrification Authority, whose five members are appointed by the governor, reviews the cooperatives' federal loan applications and consumer comments.

Some state and federal rules about electric service have been eased recently, allowing utilities more flexibility to buy power on the wholesale market, for example. But a clear picture of how the regulations will change nationally and in North Carolina has not yet emerged.

Electric utility service areas



Municipal Electric Systems

1. Albemarle
2. Apex
3. Ayden
4. Belhaven
5. Benson
6. Black Creek
7. Bostic
8. Cherryville
9. Clayton
10. Concord
11. Cornelius
12. Dallas
13. Drexel
14. Edenton
15. Elizabeth City
16. Enfield
17. Farmville
18. Fayetteville
19. Forest City
20. Fountain
21. Fremont
22. Gastonia
23. Granite Falls
24. Greenville
25. Hamilton
26. Hertford
27. High Point
28. Highlands
29. Hobgood
30. Hookerton
31. Huntersville
32. Kings Mountain
33. Kinston
34. LaGrange
35. Landis
36. Laurinburg
37. Lexington
38. Lincolnton
39. Louisburg
40. Lucama
41. Lumberton
42. Macclesfield
43. Maiden
44. Monroe
45. Morganton
46. Murphy
47. New Bern
48. Newton
49. Oak City
50. Pikeville
51. Pinetops
52. Pineville
53. Red Springs
54. Robersonville
55. Rocky Mount
56. Scotland Neck
57. Selma
58. Sharpsburg
59. Shelby
60. Smithfield
61. Southport
62. Stantonsburg
63. Statesville
64. Tarboro
65. Wake Forest
66. Walstonburg
67. Washington
68. Waynesville
69. Wilson
70. Windsor
71. Winterville
72. Lake Lure: *generates power for CP&L.*
73. New River Light & Power *is a subsidiary of Appalachian State University in Boone, and serves the university and the city of Boone.*
74. Western Carolina University *is a utility that serves the university in Cullowhee.*

A Tri-State EMC, McCaysville, GA

B Broad River Electric Co-op, Gaffney, S.C.

C Mecklenburg Electric Co-op, Chase City, Va.

D Shipyard Power & Light supplies electric service to 150 boat slips in New Bern.

North Carolina

Investor-owned electric utilities

Carolina Power & Light

- Headquartered in Raleigh.
- Serves approximately 967,000 North Carolina accounts.
- Generates electric power at 16 different plants.

Duke Power

- Headquartered in Charlotte.
- Serves approximately 1.4 million North Carolina accounts.
- Generates electric power at 31 different plants.

Nantahala Power & Light Company

- Headquartered in Franklin.
- Wholly owned subsidiary of Duke Power since 1988.
- Serves approximately 56,000 accounts.
- Generates electric power at 11 hydroelectric facilities.

Virginia Power

- Headquartered in Richmond.
- Operates in northeastern North Carolina as North Carolina Power.
- Serves approximately 101,000 N.C. accounts.
- Generates electric power at 18 different plants.

Electric cooperatives

- Owned and governed by their members.
- Approximately 750,000 North Carolina homes, farms and businesses served by cooperatives (also known as electric membership corporations or EMCs), approximately 1.7 million people.
- 5 co-ops based in Virginia, Tennessee, Georgia and South Carolina serve border areas in N.C.
- 28 co-ops headquartered in North Carolina.
- 27 co-ops belong to the North Carolina Electric Membership Corporation, a generation and transmission cooperative that supplies its members with power primarily purchased from other utilities. NCEMC is the largest buyer of wholesale electric power in the nation and also owns a partial interest in the Catawba Nuclear Station in York County, S.C. and two diesel-powered generating facilities in Buxton and Ocracoke.
- All 28 N.C. co-ops belong to the North Carolina Association of Electric Cooperatives, a trade association that performs services statewide, including publishing Carolina Country magazine.

City governments 1

- 74 municipally owned electric systems serve approximately 500,000 North Carolina households and businesses.
- 72 of these systems are members of Electricities of North Carolina, an umbrella organization that manages two power agencies supplying wholesale electricity directly to 51 Electricities members and indirectly to another five members. These power agencies are North Carolina Municipal Power Agency Number 1, which has a partial interest in the Catawba Nuclear Station, and North Carolina Eastern Municipal Power Agency, which has partial interests in CP&L's Mayo and Roxboro fossil steam plants and Brunswick and Harris nuclear plants.
- A portion of the electric power for these municipally owned systems is purchased wholesale from investor-owned utilities.

CP&L | Duke Power | Nantahala | Virginia Power | Electric Cooperatives

Blue Ridge Mountain EMC, Young Harris, Ga.

Mountain Electric Cooperative, Mountain City, Tenn.

Fresh food from farms: It's friendly, too

Wherever you are in the state, you're not far from a farmers market

Text and photos by Renee Gannon

On a hazy, late spring afternoon, a young businessman, minus his coat and tie, wanders from stand to stand at the Piedmont Triad Farmers Market, asking questions about certain vegetables that seem foreign to him. At the Craven Farms stand, he asks Shirley Craven if he could buy peas already shelled. She shows him the Ziplock bag full of recently shelled garden peas. He hesitates before backing away. "I'm just not sure I can cook them," he sheepishly admits.

"It's easy. Just put them in a pot with water and some butter and cook for 20 minutes," Shirley Craven softly explains. "You can do it." The man nods an OK and carries the bag to the register.

Scenes such as this are played out every day at the various farmers markets across North Carolina. From the smallest parking lot stand to the State Farmers Market in Raleigh, farmers and customers carry on the ancient tradition of trade. Greens, squash, onions, new potatoes, sweet potatoes, beans, peas, corn, cucumbers, lettuce, cabbage, tomatoes, peaches, cantaloupes, watermelons, turnips, beets, peppers, strawberries, pumpkins, and almost any other vegetable or fruit that can be grown in the state usually makes an appearance during the year at local and regional farmers markets.

Shirley Craven readily admits that the four-year-old market located off Interstate 40 between Greensboro and Winston-Salem kept the family farm she manages with her husband Farrell in business. "Before the market opened in 1995, we were just about ready to lose our farm," she says. "We tried to sell wholesale to truckers but just kept losing. We began selling here the first year the market opened and have seen a 30 percent increase in receipts every year."

Craven drives 75 miles each way, every day, from the small community of Norman in Richmond County, to supply her stand with fresh produce. "Peggy [Tuttle] and Debbie [White] open the stand for me at 6 a.m., while I'm picking produce. I usually arrive at the market around 11 a.m. with a fresh load," she says. "It's worth the drive. I can't say enough about the market and what it has meant to my family. It saved our farm."

The markets offer consumers fresh, nutritious produce with lots of friendly service, while furnishing the small farmer an outlet for produce, as well as employment for local workers. "The market has been a godsend to the local farmers and to workers like myself," says Peggy Tuttle, an employee for the

Craven Farms stand who lives in nearby Kernersville. "And the customers have been just wonderful, so appreciative. It's a great atmosphere for everyone that sells and buys here. And it's funny, but when the farmers' area of the market opens again in the spring, and you see your old customers, it's like a family reunion."

Dollars & cents

According to Louis Johnson, assistant director of the Farmers Market Division at the N.C. Department of Agriculture, the state-owned regional markets in Asheville, Charlotte, Greensboro and Raleigh annually generate approximately $140 million in combined revenue, which includes both wholesale, nursery sales and farmer retail. "You can double that figure when you add in 75 or so local and county markets throughout the state," he says.

A recent General Assembly report states that every dollar spent on the four state-owned markets is turned over three times. "The revenue clearly reflects that the markets are a plus for the state's investment," says Charlie Edwards, manager of the State Farmers Market in Raleigh. The Raleigh market sees an annual revenue of $90 million and approximately 1,000 farmers from southeastern North Carolina selling at the market during different times of the year.

The visitor count at the markets increases each year as well. The count for the four regional markets has reached approximately 3.5 million annual visitors. "We feel once we can get people to the market to see what it is about, they will be back," says Johnson. Add to that the local markets' customers and the figure may more than double.

Visitors to a farmers market tend to come from within a 35-mile radius. But tourist business has picked up in recent years, especially at the Greensboro market located on Interstate 40, halfway between the mountains and the coast. Shirley Craven reports that she has had customers from Florida to Canada, and has a regular customer from Indiana that even calls before reaching the market to make sure certain items are available.

As for sellers, the circle surrounding a market widens a bit. The majority of the sellers at the Raleigh market are from the central and eastern parts of the state, but some farmers travel from the mountains and Piedmont regions to the Capitol City. In Greensboro, Dexter Hill, manager of the Piedmont Triad Farmers Market, reports that approximately 400 farmers from at least 13 counties surrounding Greensboro sell at the market during the year. "Some sellers live all the way up to the Virginia line, some in the Sandhills, others in Taylorsville and Salisbury, and others locally."

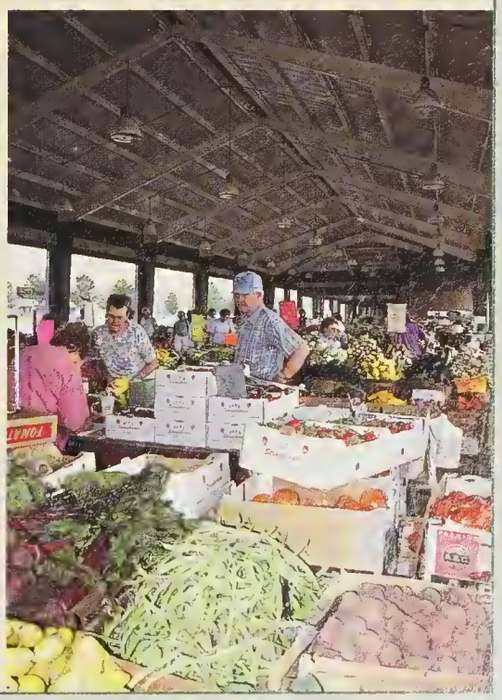
A wide pulling region is needed in a complex market such as Greensboro, says Hill. "We need farmers from different regions to satisfy the consumer by supplying products for a longer season. In early spring, products from the east are in-season, and as the year goes on, the other regions then become available. We can extend the season of products as each growing area's produce becomes available."

> "When the farmers' area of the market opens in the spring, and you see your old customers, it's like a family reunion."
> *Peggy Tuttle, Kernersville*

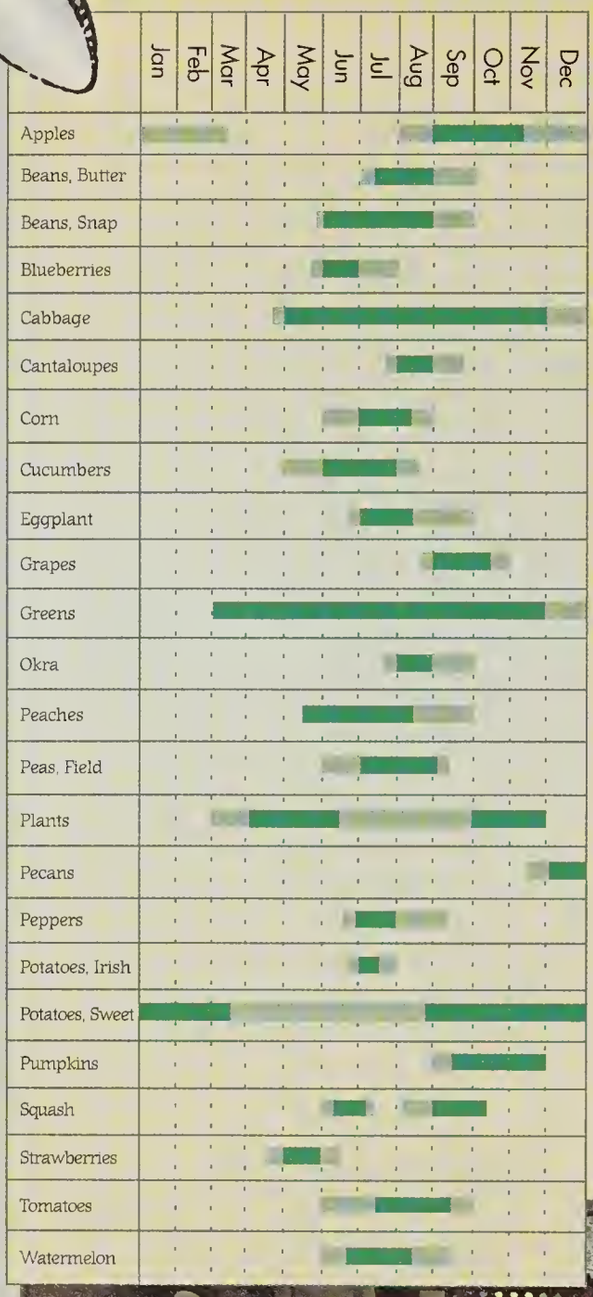
How times have changed

More and more items are being offered to accommodate various consumer tastes in an ever-growing multicultural society. Bok choy, red lettuce, Romaine lettuce, broccoli and at least 15 different varieties of peppers are now offered at the markets, along with other fruits and vegetables that just a few years ago could only be found in specialty stores.

Produce preferences are just some of the changes Newton Grove farmer Debra Lee has seen in her 30 years of coming to the state market in Raleigh. She remembers sleeping in the foot of the family truck while her parents sold produce at the old market location on Hodges Street, and thinking she had



Seasons for NC Commodities



received a gift from heaven when she was given a fold-up chaise lounge chair to use at the market.

Today, Lee sells her farm's produce at the larger, updated facility on Lake Wheeler Road and Interstate 40 the market moved to in 1991. The biggest change that has affected her business is the fact that many people don't cook vegetables like they used to. It's a hurry-up society full of microwave meals and fast food. But when she helps a new customer, offering advice on how to prepare a vegetable, the customer comes back.

Debra, her mother Edna, and husband Terry Raynor sell produce 10 months out of the year, beginning with greens, pecans and sweet potatoes in late winter/early spring and ending with pumpkins in the fall. Business really picks up in mid-June with the arrival of sweet corn.

Shucking corn and shelling beans and peas is yet another change Debra has made to accommodate her customers. "Some people just won't buy corn, peas or beans unless most of the work is done for them. It adds expense and time, but the produce sells," she says.

Farming today is tough, admits Debra Lee, with the unpredictable weather and rising costs. "But I don't know anything else to do but farm and sell produce. I was raised loving it and I told my Daddy once that if I couldn't farm and sell the produce it would be like taking the bottle away from a baby. I just enjoy it. There are other ways I could make a living, but the people that keep coming back make it all worthwhile."

The farmers markets also offer an education to consumers about where food comes from. Today's society is far removed from one of the basic human needs—food production. The market provides the opportunity for consumers to ask the person who grows the food about the product—the variety, when it was grown, if it was sprayed and with what, cooking instructions, canning and freezing tips.

"There is a connection between urban people and rural people that is still very much alive," says Charlie Edwards in Raleigh. "The farmers market system is growing throughout the state with local areas beginning to offer a market for local farmers. This urban-rural connection is not something that is dying out as some people may tend to believe."

Adds Dexter Hill at the Greensboro market: "The market helps support and sustain the local farm economy while providing the local consumer with fresher, healthier produce—all in one place. It's neighbors supporting neighbors."

And in today's health-conscious world, locally grown, fresh produce will be in even more demand as the population continues to increase in the state. Says Edwards, "where better to get those five daily servings of fresh fruits and vegetables than at the local farmers market. You can deal directly with the farmer and get the freshest produce possible without getting your hands dirty."

Farmers Markets

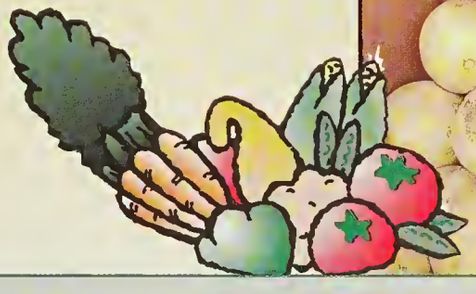
Here is a listing of the state-run farmers markets. As for local markets, approximately 75 dot the highways and byways of the state, in addition to the numerous pick-your-own farms and roadside stands. For the location of the market nearest you, please call the N.C. Department of Agriculture's marketing division at (919) 733-7887 or check out the Carolina Country web site at www.ncemcs.com/carolina_country for a listing.

Western North Carolina Farmers Market
Asheville, (828) 253-1691
open all year

Charlotte Regional Farmers Market
Charlotte, (704) 357-1269
open mid-March through December

Piedmont Triad Farmers Market
Greensboro, (910) 605-9157
open all year

State Farmers Market
Raleigh, (919) 733-7417
open all year



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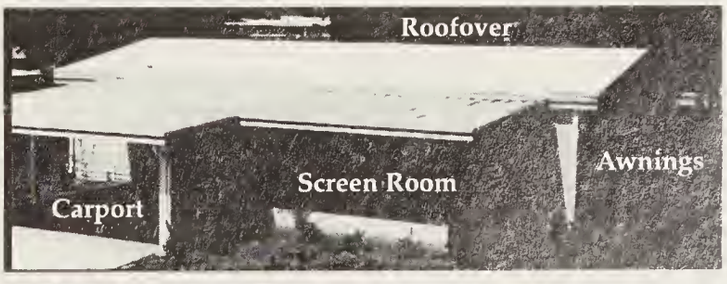

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Carolina close-up

Compiled by Renee Gannon

Davidson County Hospice plans Aug. 8 dinner

Hospice of Davidson County and Kaleidoscope Kids' second annual summer fundraiser is scheduled for August 8 at North Davidson High School. The activities begin at 5 p.m. with a gourmet dinner prepared by the Triad Chefs Association, followed by a silent as well as a live auction. The climax of the evening will be a raffle for a 1998 Ford F-250 Truck. The winner of the truck may choose the truck or $16,000. Cost for the dinner is $50 per person. Raffle tickets are $100 each.

"Proceeds from this event will allow us to provide needed services to terminally ill adults and seriously ill children without regard to their ability to pay," says Glenda Walters, Hospice's director of community relations.

Hospice of Davidson County provides health, emotional, spiritual and practical services to terminally ill adults and their families. Kaleidoscope Kids, a specialized program of Hospice of Davidson County, provides support services to seriously ill children and their families.

Anyone interested in attending this event or purchasing a truck raffle ticket should call Hospice of Davidson County at (336) 248-6185. Raffle ticket holders need not be present to win.

Stokes County Writers publish first book

The Stokes County Writer's Group, a collaboration between the Stokes County Arts Council and the Danbury Public Library, has published its first printed booklet called "No Straight Roads". This booklet, which features short stories, poetry and non-fiction by people who live and work in Stokes County, is now available for sale. Individual copies are $5.

The Stokes County Writer's Group is accepting submissions for the next issue of "No Straight Roads". Submission may be in the form of poetry, short story, non-fiction, graphic art, photography or cartoon. Please send original submissions to "No Straight Roads", c/o Stokes County Arts Council, PO Box 66, Danbury, NC 27016.

Evening Elegance: 150 Years of Formal Fashions

A new exhibit at the Mint Museum of Art in Charlotte recalls the opulent history of formal fashion, from La Belle Epoque (1895-1914) through the return to ostentatious dress marked by the Ronald Reagan era. The exhibit runs from July 25 to October 4.

Featured are 80 evening gowns and dresses, semi-formal and cocktail wear and men's formal attire from the museum's costume collection by legendary designers such as Christian Dior, Hattie Carnegie, Bill Blass, Valentino Garavani and Gianni Versace.

A large selection of evening accessories, including footwear, handbags, hats, eyewear, fans, furs and costume jewelry will also be displayed. A special selection of diamonds and gold jewelry from the Tiffany Archives Collection of Parisppany, N.J., accompanies the exhibition.

Two dresses are likely to be crowd favorites, says Charles L. Mo., Mint director of collections and exhibitions: a glitzy Omar Kiam evening dress from the Estate of Ethel Merman and a ballerina-length strapless evening gown created for Diana, Princess of Wales.

Admission to the Mint Museum of Art is $4 for adults, $3 for seniors, $2 for students and free for children under 12 years of age. Free hours are each Tuesday evening from 5 p.m. to 10 p.m. and the second Sunday of each month. For more information, call (704) 337-2000.

Hatteras Lighthouse Prints

The "Hatteras" lighthouse painted by regional artist Sherry W. Thurston is now available in print format. The total number of prints to be issued is 1,270 in different size formats, including seven artist proof editions (printed in 1998) of 60 prints and a later printing as a lithograph. To order a print of "Hatteras," or for more information, call Thurston Art Gallery at (910) 327-1781, fax (910) 327-0448 or e-mail: thusart@internet.net. Inquiries may also be mailed to: Thurston Art Gallery, 328 Peru Road, Sneads Ferry, NC 28460.

Folkmoot USA dances through the mountains July 13-26

Western North Carolina hosts the 15th annual North Carolina International Folk Festival, Folkmoot USA, July 13 through July 26. This year, a total of 400 folk dancers and musicians are expected from 11 countries: Belarus, Belize, Chile, Daghestan, Israel, Macedonia, Monaco, North Cyprus, Philippines, Romania and Togo. Since its inception, Folkmoot USA has welcomed performers from more than 75 countries.

The festival programs will be held in Waynesville and Maggie Valley, as well as towns throughout 11 mountain counties.

Recently named a Top 20 event in the Southeast by the Southeast Tourism Society, Folkmoot USA is more than an opportunity to learn about international music and dance. Visitors learn first hand what's happening in places around the world by getting to know the international guests at an informal gathering after the opening parade in Waynesville on Friday, July 17. A special candlelight ceremony closes the festival with all nations joining in a dance of friendship.

Performers include foot-stompin' Appalachian cloggers and buck dancing, graceful Filipino dancers in colorful silk, mystical Belizeans chanting ancestral songs, energetic stilt dancers from Togo, Caucasus Mountain warriors from Daghestan and exquisite costumes on Macedonians.

Downtown Waynesville becomes a world bazaar on July 25, as the international performers join more than 100 crafters and food vendors. Special programs are held for children as well.

Some events are free, but for those requiring tickets, organizers recommend early purchases. Tickets are on sale now at the festival office in Waynesville. For more information and a complete schedule of festival events, call the festival office at (704) 452-2997 or write Folkmoot USA, P.O. Box 658, Waynesville, NC 28786 or e-mail: folkmoot@pobox.com. A web site has also been set up at www.folkmoot.

New ORTHO spray system makes lawn care easier

ORTHO has developed a new system for handling common lawn and garden problems. The two-part Lock 'N Spray system features interchangeable product cartridges that snap into a specially designed nozzle that fits on any garden hose.

According to ORTHO, Lock 'N Spray virtually eliminates contact with the product ingredients. The product in the cartridge and the water in the garden hose mix automatically. Leftover material stays in the cartridge.

For help with lawn and garden problems, call the ORTHO Helpline at (800) 225-2883. For more information about the ORTHO Lock 'N Spray system, contact your local lawn, garden or farm supply store.

The Southeast in early maps

William P. Cumming made the study of maps his lifelong calling. For nearly his entire professional life, Cumming taught English literature at Davidson College, near Charlotte. But it was his life-long passion of the study of history of cartography and of the exploration of North America that brought him international fame.

"The Southeast in Early Maps," first published in 1958, is Cumming's classic study of the mapping of the Southeast before the American Revolution. At the time of his death in 1989, Cumming was working on a third revision of the book, with the assistance of Louis De Vorsey, a highly regarded historical geographer from the University of Georgia. De Vorsey continued the revisions after Cumming's death, and now the third edition of The Southeast in Early Maps is available from the University of North Carolina Press.

The new edition contains 124 illustrations. It features an introductory essay on the early historical cartography of the region, an extensive annotated checklist of printed and manuscript local maps from the colonial period, an updated bibliography and a new section written by De Vorsey on the role of Native Americans in the mapping of the Southeast.

The book is available at bookstores or from the University of North Carolina Press (cost $90). Toll-free credit card orders at (800) 848-6224.

Barbecue and sweet soul music

Always wanted to throw a humdinger of a rib and chicken throwdown, but couldn't come up with any original ideas for the festivities? The latest addition to the Rhino Records lifestyle collection, called Bar-B-Que Soul-A-Bration, might help.

The party pack binder holds six menu-planning ideas including recipes, party-planning timelines, shopping lists, ingredient coupons, photocopy-ready invitations and party game ideas. Two CDs feature soul music tracks such as "Green Onions" by Booker T. & The MG's, "Grits" by James Brown, "The Happy Song" by Otis Redding, "Let the Good Times Roll" by Bobby Bland & B.B. King, "Jambalaya" by Fats Domino and "Rubberband Man" by the Spinners. Two Karaoke tracks of "Soul Man" and "Respect" are also included with lyric sheets.

Suggested retail price for the Party Pack is $31.98 on CD and $24.98 on cassette at local music retail stores. It is also available by calling RhinoDirect at (800) 432-0020.

Making cents of your electric bill

by James Dulley

Geothermal heat pumps take advantage of ground insulation to efficiently cool and heat homes

A possible solution to high utility costs may be a geothermal heat pump—an ideal year-round system that provides comfortable heating and air-conditioning. A geothermal heat pump is an ideal year-round system for almost every home.

These systems are extremely efficient. In the winter, for each $1 on your utility bills you get up to $4 worth of heat ($3 free heat from the earth). Basically, a geothermal heat pump uses the ground for its heating and cooling capacity. Over its life, a geothermal heat pump can save thousands of dollars and be less expensive to operate than other heating and cooling systems.

In the summer, the savings are also great. Whereas your old central air-conditioner may have an efficiency of 8.0, some geothermal heat pumps have efficiencies as high as 2.0. Even more important is the steady cooling capacity for comfort and good dehumidification (an added benefit for allergy sufferers).

A geothermal heat pump can also cut your water heating costs substantially. In the summer, an optional desuperheater diverts the waste heat from the air-conditioner to the water heater. This provides free hot water as a by-product of air-conditioning. During the winter, the geothermal heat pump can use the ground to heat your water at half the current costs.

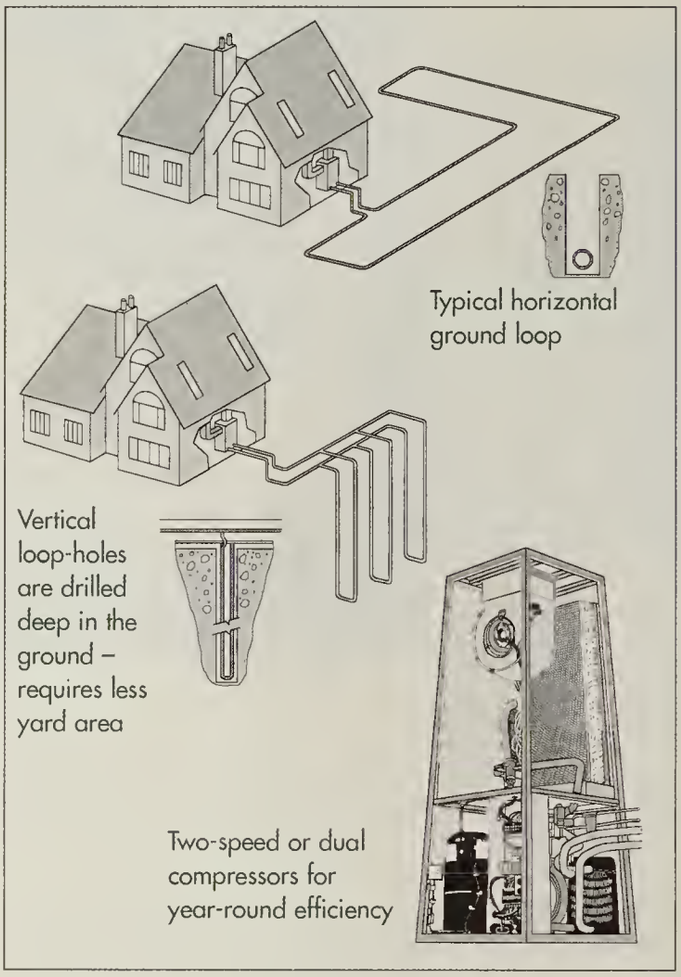
Geothermal heat pumps attain high efficiency because the ground temperature stays fairly constant year-round. You can imagine how much easier and more efficient it is to draw heat from the ground at 50 degrees than from the outdoor air. In the summer, the situation is reversed and the cooling output remains high no matter how hot the weather is.

Most geothermal heat pumps use a water/antifreeze-filled plastic pipe loop buried in your yard. This earth loop is used instead of the typical noisy outdoor condenser fan unit. This results in a simpler system with the small, quiet mechanical unit located indoors (garage, utility room or basement) for protection. If you have wells or a pond, they can be used instead of the ground loop.

There are many designs of geothermal heat pumps to choose from depending on your budget, yard and specific needs. The ground pipes are normally buried in a very narrow horizontal trench dug with a backhoe. If your yard is small, the pipes can be placed in vertical holes drilled into the ground. Both methods are equally effective if designed properly.

For the best comfort and efficiency, select a geothermal heat pump with multi-level heating and cooling outputs. Two-level output models use either two small compressors or a single two-speed compressor and a variable-speed blower. This allows them to adjust the output to match the changing heating and cooling needs of your house.

Three-level models use two different-sized compressors. In mild weather, they run on the smallest compressor. In moderate weather, they run on the larger compressor. In severely hot or cold weather, the two compressors run simultaneously. These types of units are ideal for warm, humid climates where summertime dehumidification is as important as actual cooling.


Typical horizontal ground loop
Vertical loop-holes are drilled deep in the ground – requires less yard area
Two-speed or dual compressors for year-round efficiency

In cold climates, these multi-level heat pumps are an excellent fit. The high-output level is sized to the maximum heating requirement. In the summer, with the lower air-conditioning requirements, it runs in the low-output level for excellent comfort.

Geothermal heat pumps are available as complete systems with blowers, air cleaners, water heaters, etc. If your budget is limited and your existing furnace or heat pump blower still works, you can install just the compressor unit and loop and use your existing equipment.

Write for Utility Bills Update No. 793 a buyer's guide of 15 single and multi-level geothermal heat pumps, efficiencies, outputs, features and a fuel cost comparison chart. Please include $2 and a business-size self-addressed stamped envelope and mail to James Dulley, Carolina Country, P.O. Box 54987, Cincinnati, OH 45254.

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Linemen as college students

North Carolina's cooperatives offer a college degree in electric lineman technology

Text and photo by Renee Gannon

The lights go out during a vicious thunderstorm, but you know it's just a short matter of time before the comforting glow returns. Electric cooperative linemen are on the job. And with technology advances happening so rapidly in the electric industry, these linemen are learning new techniques on and off the line to continue the safe, reliable service customers expect.

North Carolina's co-op linemen today have an opportunity to take an extra step in their technical experience by returning to school to earn a college degree in their field.

Approximately 85 electric cooperative linemen from throughout North Carolina enrolled this year at Nash Community College intent on earning an associate's degree in Electric Lineman Technology. The program offers the linemen the expertise needed in today's highly technical workplace.

"Safety is an issue for all concerned—both lineman and consumer," says Tommy Greer, director of job training and safety for the North Carolina Association of Electric Cooperatives (NCAEC). "The degree will benefit the lineman, the co-op and the consumer by enhancing the lineman's safety, technical and communication skills. And with changes coming in the utilities industry, it will pay off to have highly trained employees."

Job and safety training at Nash Community College.

2nd in the U.S.

The program began developing when Chuck Terrill became CEO of NCAEC three years ago. As CEO at Kansas Electric Power Cooperative, he was familiar with the nation's first such degree program in the Kansas college system, and he suggested that a similar program could benefit linemen and consumers here.

North Carolina is the second state to have an Electric Lineman Technology Associate Degree program, approved by the N.C. Community College System. And according to Carolyn Herr Watts, NCAEC's senior vice president of corporate relations, other states want to follow our lead.

A recent survey, she says, projects a $1 million difference in lifetime earning power between an individual with a high school education and one with an associate degree. "The degree program is an investment in the individual, as well as in the community," she says.

From line construction to advanced math

The two-year program offers students a well-rounded education. They complete a total of 64 credit hours of course work for the degree. The technical courses consist of 32 credit hours covering safety codes, line construction and energy management. Another 15 credit hours balance out the technical portion with classes in advanced math, English and communications skills. A course in computer science is also required. The final requirements involve credit hours for on-the-job training and first aid skills.

All but three of the technical courses must be completed at Nash Community College. "NCAEC has had a long association with the college and has helped establish a training field, the necessary underground structure and a soon-to-be completed substation," Watts said.

Linemen can take the rest of the program's courses, except for the on-the-job training credit hours, at any of the 19 collaborating community colleges. They are: Nash, Halifax, Haywood, Isothermal, Mitchell, Tri-County, Western Piedmont, Alamance, Wilkes, Piedmont, Anson, Central, James Sprunt, Beaufort, Pamlico, Surry, Sampson, Durham Tech and Randolph.

"The linemen are enjoying the program," says Emmett S. Patterson, manager of the Pee Dee Electric Membership Corporation in Wadesboro. "It's a good training process. The on-the-job training facet of the program gives the lineman an education in work that can't be learned from a book, while the book knowledge shows the lineman why things are done certain ways. And it's a matter of exchanging ideas for the benefit of all."

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Math Words

Letters have been substituted for digits in this division puzzle. Repeated letters stand for repeated digits. Given C=2, can you replace the missing digits that create this FIRE WORKS display?

```
          F I R E
      ------------
C   | W O R K S
2   |
    W O
    ---
      R
      K
    ---
    W K
    W K
    ---
        S
        S
    ---
```

Southern Exposures

The manager of an Asheville supermarket bakery set out several trays of cookies with a sign reading, "Help yourself." Customers did. Next day the sign had been amended to read, "Help yourself – to one!"

The method for curing bright leaf tobacco was discovered by accident in 1839 by a young slave in Caswell County. He fell asleep while he was supposed to be watching a barn full of tobacco curing on a plantation owned by Abisha Slade near Blanch in the north central part of the county.

When the youth, Steven, awoke, the slow fire was almost out. Running to a blacksmith's, he grabbed charred logs and threw them on the dying coals. The sudden intense heat produced beautiful bright yellow leaves. "Bright leaf" flu-cured tobacco is the major type produced today in the United States.

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Say Watt

Ball Four!

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A	C	E	T
L	O	H	D
L	T	F	L
H	E	W	I

T _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ D

Answers on page 37

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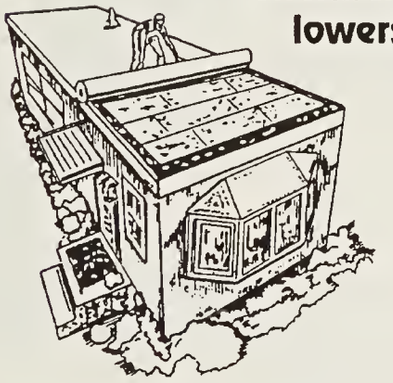

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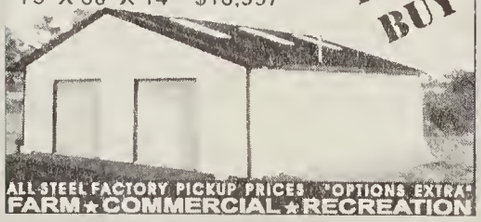

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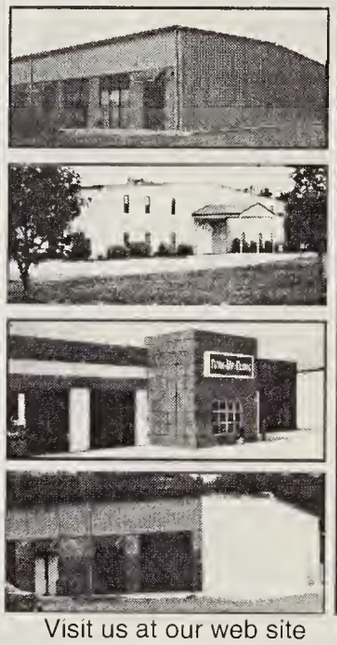

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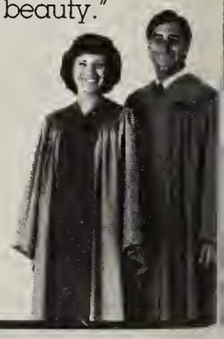

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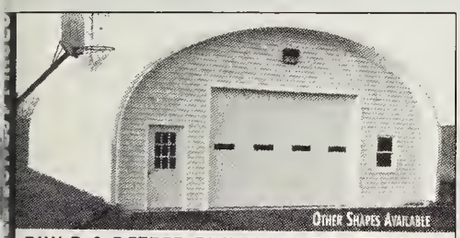

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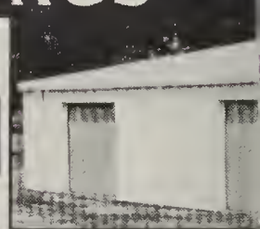

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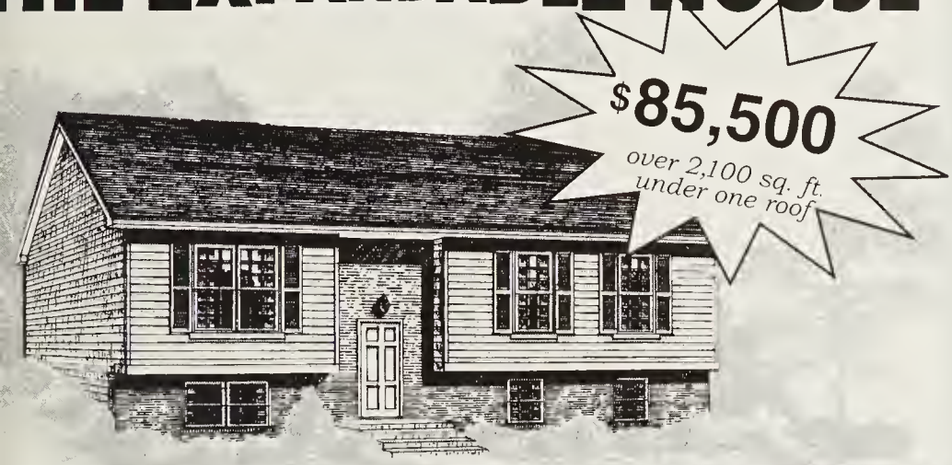

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Fireworks Extravaganza

July 4, Blowing Rock
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Antiques & Collectibles

July 4, Maggie Valley
Mountain Pride Antiques & Collectibles Show and BBQ. Full day of fun for the family, featuring antiques & collectibles market items, face painting, pony rides, watermelon-eating contest, food and entertainment. Benefits Haywood County Animal Welfare Association. 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Free admission. (800) 438-3861, ext. 330.

Arts & Crafts Show

July 4 to 5, Lake Junaluska
13th Freedom Festival Arts & Crafts Show featuring Blue Ridge artists and craftsmen. Free. Haywood County Fairgrounds. 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Appalachian Summer Festival

July 5 to August 1, Boone
The festival starts its 14th season on the campus of Appalachian State University. (800) 841-ARTS.

Benefit Concert

July 6, Winston-Salem
Pianist Clifton Matthews will perform at Reynolda House Museum of American Art. Admission $10. 8 p.m. (336) 725-5325.

Highland Games

July 9 to 12, Linville
The 43rd annual gathering of Scottish clans and fans at Grandfather Mountain. (828) 733-1333.

Agricultural Center Opening

July 10, Williamston
Official opening of the Senator Bob Martin Eastern Agricultural Center. Activities include opening ceremonies and benefit rodeo for the American Red Cross. (800) 776-8566.

Festival

July 11 to 12, Hayesville
Annual Festival on the Square will include home-cooked BBQ as well as other food, arts and crafts, entertainment and a street dance Friday night. Free.

Military Antiques Show

July 11 to 12, Wilmington
9th annual Coastal Carolina Military Antiques Show featuring arms and memorabilia from the Civil War, Indian Wars, WWI, WWII, etc. Memorabilia bought, sold and traded. Admission $5 adults; $1 for ages 7 to 12. At the Elk's Lodge. 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. (704) 282-1339.

Jerry Reed

July 11 to 12, Blowing Rock
Tweetsie Railroad's annual series of special concerts presents Jerry Reed. (828) 264-9061 or (800) 526-5740.

Folkmoot USA

July 13 to 26, Waynesville
15th annual international folk festival featuring performers from 11 countries. Programs offered in 10 different western NC counties. (704) 452-2997.

Fiddler's Convention

July 17 to 18, Sparta
4th Alleghany County Fiddler's Convention features good music, food, dancing and vendors selling ware. Higgins Agricultural Fairgrounds. (336) 372-2033.

Pig Pickin'

July 18, Triplett
Stewart Simmons Volunteer Fire Department will host a Pig Pickin' Barbeque to help purchase fire equipment. "All you can eat." Entertainment and raffle for prizes. 3 to 8 p.m. Donations: $6 for adults; $3 for children under 12; $5 for take-outs. (828) 264-8088.

Story-telling Festival

July 18, Spruce Pine
1st annual festival featuring Tall Tales, Mountain Yarns and Railroad Lore. At Riverside Park. 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. (704) 765-7351.

Pine, Peanut & Pork Festival

July 18-19, Surry, Va.
Annual festival features arts & crafts vendors, food vendors, educational exhibits and entertainment. Chippokes Plantation State Park. (757) 294-3625.

Symphony Concert

July 24, Blowing Rock
N.C. Symphony concert on the grounds of Chetola. 6:30 p.m. (828) 295-9301.

Concert

July 24, Winston-Salem
The Cassatt String Quarter of New York City performs at the Reynolda House Museum of American Art. Admission $8. 8 p.m. (336) 725-5325.

Canoe & Kayak Festival

July 25, Dan River
All day festival featuring fun downriver race for all abilities, canoe and kayak displays and demos, used boat sale, food and parking by the riverside. (336) 593-8283.

Artillery Demonstration

July 25, Four Oaks
At Bentonville Battleground, uniformed interpreters perform Civil War artillery drill on a full-scale three-inch ordnance rifle, a common field piece of the period. Demonstrations given hourly, 1 to 4 p.m. (910) 594-0789.

Tobacco Harvest Festival

July 25, Durham
At Duke Homestead, traditional tobacco harvesting and curing, mock tobacco auction, children's games and refreshments. 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. (919) 477-5498.

Old-Fashion Ice Cream Social

July 25, Pinnacle
Fun for the family at Horne Creek Farm. Activities include homemade ice cream, children's games, various contests, music and more. 12 noon to 5 p.m. (910) 325-2298.

Watermelon Festival

July 29 to August 1, Murfreesboro
13th annual N.C. Watermelon Festival includes crafts fair, concessions, amusement rides, NASCAR remote control races, puppet show, musical entertainment, fireworks, nightly street dancing, free watermelon slices and watermelon games. (252) 398-5922 or (800) 398-5922.

Mineral & Gem Festival

July 30 to August 2, Spruce Pine
41st annual retail show featuring more than 50 distributors and dealers. Tours of Fluorescent Mine. Admission $3 adults; children under 12 free with paid adult. Pinebridge Coliseum. (800) 227-3912.

Furnishings Festival

August 1 to 2, High Point
N.C. Furnishings Festival celebrates the heritage and scope of the furniture industry. Demonstrations by craftsmen, displays highlighting the industry technological development, antiques, entertainment, food, arts and crafts, games, rides and collectibles. (336) 956-1888.

Battle Reenactment

August 1-2, Sanford
At House in the Horseshoe, reenactment of tory David Fanning's attack on patriot leader Philip Alston. Cannon-firing demonstrations also performed. Concessions available. Saturday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. (battle 4 p.m.); Sunday, 12 noon to 5 p.m. (battle 2 p.m.) (919) 947-2051.

Auction & Raffle

August 8, Welcome
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On-Going Events

Art exhibit

June 27 to Sept. 13, Beaufort
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Hank's gardening guide

by Hank Smith

July's heat calls for diligence in carefully watering lawns and gardens. Give emphasis to plants in containers, especially those in hanging baskets. Although heat and humidity characterize midsummer, they do not signal a lull in garden enjoyment—nor a halt to garden chores. Spring tasks are paying off in colorful blooms, lush lawns, edible vegetables and welcome shade. New growth of shrubs has matured to a good stage for rooting cuttings or for layering low-growing limbs of plants such as azaleas and oriental magnolias. Don't forget garden pests and diseases thrive and multiply in sultry weather. Give spraying and dusting top priority if you use chemical control.

Bearded Iris

Prepare now for iris

Preparing planting beds for bearded iris now will allow soil to settle before rhizomes are planted in late July or August. Dig soil at least 18 inches deep and break up any heavy clumps. With heavy soil, add well-rotted sawdust or water-soaked peat moss, spading the mixture into the bed. Iris responds best in full sun.

Bedding plants

Many flowering annuals used during spring and summer can be grown for autumn color. Sow seed now of marigold, zinnia, periwinkle, cockscomb, petunia and morning glory.

Dahlias

After the first crop of flowers, cut back plants to about half their growth. Give a light application of complete fertilizer. Following this treatment, plants will branch out and produce a good crop of fall blooms. To avoid crooked stems and wind damage, plants should be tied securely to stakes.

Vegetables

Prolong the bearing season of peppers, cucumbers, beans, eggplants, tomatoes, okra, squash and similar vegetables by harvesting frequently. If seed are allowed to ripen, production will be lessened—or cease altogether.

Rose care

Don't neglect roses during summer months. With proper care, roses will reward you with blooms throughout the growing season. Hybrid teas, multifloras and floribunds demand weekly applications of pesticide for insect and disease control. Chewing and sucking insects, mites, blackspot and powdery mildew are the most frequent enemies. Sprays usually give more complete coverage of foliage than do dusts, resulting in better insect and disease control. Water with a slow stream or soaker hose to assure good penetration deep into soil. Never sprinkle foliage; water at ground level. Damp foliage encourages powdery mildew. Thick mulch prevents rose bed from drying out quickly, and has a cooling effect on the root system. Once a month during growing season, apply a half-cup of complete balanced fertilizer to each plant. A specially prepared rose food may be used. Always water well after fertilizer application.

Tree care

Lack of water is the prime cause of midsummer tree problems. Two symptoms are stunted growth and premature leaf drop. Water deeply during dry spells. Use a watering rod stuck 6 to 8 inches into soil, or by letting water trickle slowly from your water hose for several hours.

Peat pots

When using vegetables or flowers growing in peat pots, remove rim of the pot before planting. If rim is left exposed above soil surface, capillary action of the peat pot will draw moisture from soil and damage root system of the plant.

Prune asters and chrysanthemums

Hardy mums and asters are beginning to send up long stems that should be cut back to make plants low and symmetrical. This induces side growth, which will mature into stronger, upright stems to support masses of blooms to come. Keep plants well watered to prevent wilting of maturing new growth. If you're growing large-flowering "football" varieties, do not remove tip growth. Rather, wait until bloom buds form later in the season, then remove all but the single terminal bud.

Lichens signal root SOS

Gardeners occasionally become concerned about the presence of lichens on woody stems of shrubs, and limbs and trunks of some trees (especially live oaks). These paper-like, gray-green masses are not parasites—they are forms of plant life made up of algae and fungi. Lichens do no damage to the host plant, yet they do signal serious problems: poor soil aeration and drainage; poor soil preparation at time of planting; nematodes on roots; or roots buried too deeply in compacted soil. Lichens indicate that the plant is growing at a very slow rate. When these problems are corrected, the plant usually begins to grow vigorously, producing healthier blooms, and lichens gradually disappear.

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Voyager's Corner
Answers
Unscramblit!
American Indian Population
Say Watt
The call of the wild.
Math Words
WORKS/C = FIRE
10986/2 = 5493

Scalloped tomatoes

6 large tomatoes
1 tablespoon grated onion
1 1/2 cups soft bread cubes
1/4 cup melted butter

Peel tomatoes and cut in quarters. Place in saucepan, and mash slightly to press out some of the juice. Cook over very low heat about 10 minutes, stirring constantly. Add grated onion. Alternate layers of tomatoes and bread cubes in a buttered 1-quart casserole. Add butter, and bake at 375 degrees about 20 to 30 minutes. Yield: 4 to 6 servings.

Tomato cucumber salad

3 medium tomatoes, sliced
1 teaspoon chopped fresh basil
1 small cucumber, thinly sliced
1 teaspoon salt
1 green onion, chopped
A pinch of pepper
3 tablespoons Italian salad dressing
A pinch of garlic salt
1 tablespoon vinegar

In a serving bowl, layer half the tomatoes, all of the cucumber, then remaining tomatoes. Sprinkle with onion. Combine remaining ingredients in a jar with tight-fitting lid; shake well. Pour over salad. Cover and chill for 25 minutes or until ready to serve. Yield: 4 servings.

Tomatoes and okra

3 slices bacon
4 cups of half-inch sliced okra
1 medium green pepper, finely chopped
2 cloves garlic, minced (optional)
4 large tomatoes, peeled and chopped
Salt and pepper to taste

Fry bacon until crisp. Remove from fat. Cook okra in bacon drippings. Add green pepper, onion, and garlic to drippings; stir in tomatoes and cooked bacon. Add salt and pepper as needed. Cover skillet and cook an additional 15 minutes. Yield: 8 servings.

Since colonial days, the tomato has been grown in home gardens. Today, tomatoes are the fourth most popular vegetable in the United States, topped only by potatoes, lettuce and onions.

Whether you love them sliced with a little salt, on a sandwich, in a salad, or in a tomato pudding, summer and tomatoes just go together. Coming fresh from the garden or farmers market, tomatoes ripened on the vine are so good. Regardless of where you get your tomatoes, there are some dos and don'ts on how to handle the tomatoes once you get them in the house. Here are some tips from the N.C. Department of Agriculture:

- Don't put under-ripe tomatoes in the refrigerator. The cold stops the ripening process and changes (for the worst) that wonderful tomato flavor.
- Don't set the tomato on its stem end. The stem end of a tomato is where it is separated from the vine. The bumps around the stem end are the shoulders of the tomato and they're the tenderest part. If you leave them on their shoulders for a few days even their own weight is enough to bruise them. Once bruised, spoilage will shortly follow.
- Store unwashed tomatoes in a cool, dark place (not in the sun).
- To slice tomatoes, use a serrated knife and slice lengthwise to retain the juice.

One medium-sized tomato contributes 40 percent of the recommended daily allowance of Vitamin C. It supplies 20 percent of the requirement for Vitamin A, some of which is in the form of beta-carotene, which is associated with a reduced risk of certain cancers. Tomatoes are a good source of potassium, and also contain some B vitamins, iron and phosphorous. A single tomato is a moderately rich source of fiber with about the same amount as one slice of whole wheat bread. At the same time, tomatoes are low in calories: only 35 in a medium tomato. They're low in sodium, and like all produce, contain no cholesterol.

Harvard University researchers recently reported that men who eat at least 10 servings a week of tomato-based foods are up to 45 percent less likely to develop prostate cancer.

In North Carolina, more than 300 family farms produce some 30 million pounds of tomatoes.

For more information and recipes, contact the North Carolina Tomato Growers Association, 570 Brevard Rd., Asheville, NC 28806. Or visit the web site at www.agr.state.nc.us/markets/commodit/horticul/tomatoes

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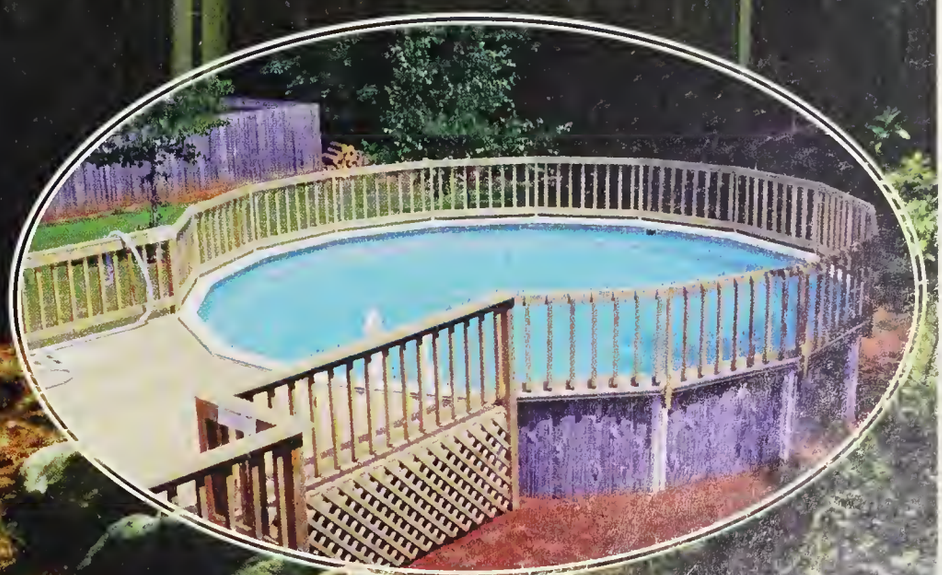

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